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Preventive Counseling without Borders: Using Mobile Devices for Teaching, Training, and Wellness Promotion

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PREVENTIVE COUNSELING WITHOUT BORDERS:

Using Mobile Devices for Teaching, Training, and Wellness Promotion

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Workshop Outline

- Introductions and Workshop Overview
- Project Description - Indivisible Self Wellness Model Revisited
- Mobile Devices/Tablets – Advantages and Challenges
- Current Project and Related Tutorials :
 - 4 – Tiered App Selection Process
 - All-Purpose iPad Tools and Apps
 - Indivisible Self Revisited
 - The Social Self – “Looking under the hood”
- Small Group Activity

Project Description

- Yearlong project - (May 2014 through present): History, rationale, and goals. Primary focus on iPads and Wellness promotion.
- Selection of wellness model to provide conceptual framework for app selection - The Indivisible Self Wellness Model (Myers & Sweeney, 2004).
- Revisiting the Indivisible Self Model (Myers & Sweeney, 2004) - Current project revisions to the model: Expanded definition of "Gender Identity" (Essential Self); Addition of three categories - "Brain Health" (Physical Self), "Sleep" (Physical Self), and "Sexual Orientation" (Essential Self).
- Developed "4th order" components, to further concretize Myers & Sweeney (2004)'s third order factor components in order to provide greater structure and consistency for iPad app selection. Toward this end, the Indivisible Self-related literature was actively utilized.

Why Tablets?

- Portable (weight and storage capacity)
- Customizable (e.g. age, developmental level, interests, cultural group identification, gender identity, etc.)
- "Private"
- Significantly increases our prevention, wellness, and counseling toolbox – a development, delivery, assessment, and evaluation tool
- Multi-sensorial and intuitive - Multiple intelligences/learning styles
- Engaging and interactive
- Neuroplasticity and neurogenesis (creative, unique, cognitive stimulation)

Why Tablets? (Cont'd)

- Not just for "Digital Natives"
- Empowering
- Potential to interface with other smart devices and data storage (e.g. smart phones, the cloud, computers, media streamers). Adjusts to the user's schedule, needs, and lifestyle, rather than the other way around.
- Inclusive/Accessible - Accessibility components; Can be used with people who have a wide range of abilities (cognitive, emotional, physical, developmental, etc.)
- Can be used individually or with multiple users
- Not only are apps prolific, many high quality apps are free or inexpensive

Challenges to Increased Use of Tablets in Counseling and Wellness Promotion

- “Digital Divide”
- Less robust
- Counselor concerns about depersonalization of the counseling process
- Confidentiality
- Limited research on the efficacy of using tablets in counseling
- Reduced experience, confidence, and competence in the use of counseling enhancing technology, tools, and apps
- Functional fixedness

App Selection – 4 Part Process:

First Stage – "Identification"

- Review of literature - Mobile devices and apps used in Counseling and Social Work initially, then Education, Special Education, Communication, iTunes U, and iBooks where this information was more abundant
- Culling through the App Store using related keywords and categories

App Selection: Second Stage – "Discovery"

- End–user ratings and reviews
- Developer descriptions and app screenshots
- Price
- File size
- In-app purchasing and related free version restrictions
- Designed for iPhone and/or iPad
- Version history
- User suitability ratings (e.g. age)

App Selection: Third Stage – "Analysis"

- Goodness of fit between the app and the project's identified wellness components
- User-friendly and intuitive, with a small learning curve; not overly complex or difficult to learn
- Versatility/multiple components
- Customization options/features
- Noteworthy features - including trend analysis, syncing/interfacing with other mobile devices, engaging, interactive, integrated cloud storage, journaling component, etc.
- Inclusive, rather than ethnocentric, although may be targeting a specific group
- Amount and nature of intrusions (e.g. ads), in-app purchasing, restrictions of free "lite" versions
- If for children, the degree of parental control available (especially re: in-app purchasing). Additionally whether follow up questions, other activities, resources, as well as tips and information for parents are provided.
- Excluded - Apps which focused on self-diagnosis, hypnosis, or "hook ups", were sexualized, contained an excessive amount of grammatical/spelling errors, or appeared to be pushing an agenda were excluded. Additionally, apps costing greater than \$10 or involved excessive in-app purchasing were not considered.
- Decision made whether there is sufficient "value added" to warrant downloading/purchasing an app for a more comprehensive "test drive".

App Selection: Fourth Stage – "Selection"

- Downloading/purchasing of app (if applicable)
- Trying the app on for size with actual or hypothetical information/data for a sufficient amount of time and extent to make a recommendation about inclusion or exclusion in the project. (Saving, syncing, incidents of "freezing", ease and reliability of operation, usage restrictions, etc.)
- "Value Added" Assessment - Compare and contrast the relative and absolute value of the app (including cost-benefit analysis; uniqueness re: concept, design, functionality, and/or operation; and degree to which users can customize their app-related experience) vs. similar apps.

Wellness-Related iPad Tools and Apps/ Indivisible Self Revisited

<https://appsto.re/us/iWw64.i>

PLEASE NOTE: Inclusion of a specific app in the current project should not be interpreted as endorsement. While the project developers exercised care in the selection of included apps, it is up to the counselor, client, and/or other (end) user to determine if any given app is appropriate for them.

Small Group Challenge

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Let us know your favorite Wellness apps!

Twitter: @Apps4Wellness

#rawlinshugheswellness

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